

HARRISON GREY FISKE PRESENTS

MRS.
FISKE

AND THE MANHATTAN COMPANY

in "THE
HIGH ROAD"

By Edward Sheldon



"The Road To The Hole in Gold"

Ex Libris

SEYMOUR DURST

0-14 4525 BOX 83

"The High Road' leads to a great success. It is not too much to say that Edward Sheldon's play scored one of the few big and deserved hits of the season. Not in many seasons has Mrs. Fiske acted with such genuine dramatic appeal, and her technique was superb."—*New York World*.

When Edward Sheldon wrote "The High Road," which is generally considered his most important play, he subtitled it "A Pilgrimage in Five Parts," and this titular explanation is not without some value. In this instance, he deals with a woman's life. His protagonist presents herself to our view when she is seventeen, and she passes from our horizon a woman of forty, a wife, a happy wife and a triumphant wife.

When Mary Page first appears she is a miserly farmer's daughter, and the drudge of the place. Into this monotonous life there comes, from the great world outside, Alan Wilson, a man of charm and inherited wealth, a dilettante in art, in whom the collector's sense is highly developed. Mary, whose life has been one of unsatisfied longings, clothes him with all the romance of which she has dreamed. She in turn appeals to him much as would some new object of art, and after a few weeks Mary goes away with him, very much as a child might go, heedless of the consequences, thinking of them, indeed, not at all. And, only an hour before, there had passed a certain Winfield Barnes, who, from an orphaned childhood, had come to local prominence as a country lawyer. And one may see in this passing something of the eternal juggling of fate if one will.

"The High Road' is the most interesting and best worth while play of the season so far. Mrs. Fiske has never done a finer piece of work than this vigorous portrayal of a developing character."—*New York Tribune*.



"It's love, Mamie—it's love—you want to love some one—
you want some one to love you."

"It was a superb exhibition of versatility that Mrs. Fiske offered and 'The High Road' will class with the best plays of the year."—*New York Commercial*.

"Mrs. Fiske is seen at her very splendid best in a big, gripping drama."—*New York Sun*.

Mary lives with Wilson for three years, dazzled at first by all the beauties to which he introduces her in a tour of the art circles of the world, her soul dormant, in love with love, and not with the man, and to this fact, toward the close of the period, she awakens. She has no regrets for the past, of which she had no understanding, and, apparently, no fears for the future. The man would wed her, but even this is rejected, for she does not love him. And she passes out of his life and out of the luxury which she had known with him and goes to begin life anew as a worker in a factory. She has found herself, in other words, and slowly and painstakingly, she begins a career devoted to the interests of the women workers of the country. She fights in their behalf and, eighteen years after, succeeds, in the face of tremendous opposition, in effecting the enactment of laws that safeguard the welfare of the women toilers of New York.

The Governor who has assisted her and who affixes his signature to the bill is the "country lawyer" who passed her, twenty-one years before, in the dooryard of her father's farmhouse. And even with youth no longer the portion of either, he loves her and she loves him and they are married—not, however, until Mary has told him the story of those three fateful years.

"In her portrayal of Mary Page, Mrs. Fiske did many remarkable things, but it was in the opening scene, as a girl of 16, that she scored her greatest victory. * * * No cold ink can do justice to that remarkably tense fourth act. Every second of it holds you!"—*New York Evening Sun*.

MARY
FISKE
CN
1277
1852
H7
P1



"Where are you sending your trunk?"
"I'm not sending it—I'm going with it."

"Full of virile life and red blod is 'The High Road, Mrs. Fiske's new play. Never before has this really wonderful actress had better opportunities, and never in her career has she taken better or more complete advantage of every chance offered her."—*New York Evening Journal*.

Thus Mary Page passes through three epochs of her "pilgrimage," and the fourth is begun when the Governor is his party's candidate for the highest office in the people's gift. Victory is within his grasp and his election appears to be assured until fate plays again with its little manikins and John Steppen Maddock appears to confront Mrs. Barnes with the spectre of Mary Page's life.

Maddock had met her for a single hour in that luxurious apartment in which Wilson had placed her. But, years later, their paths crossed again when Maddock had inherited his father's interest in a great industrial combination and stood, as a consequence, opposed to the enactment of legislation limiting the hours of woman's work in the country's factories. Maddock incidentally, too, had established a string of newspapers across the country and he admits that he needs the profits from the manufacturing trust to maintain these papers. But the papers are a power and they must be reckoned with. They oppose Barnes because Barnes stands on a platform demanding reforms that will reduce the Maddock profits.

And Maddock forces the issue. He sees a means of reviving the old scandal, and, buried though it has been for twenty years, he drags it forth. Barnes faces disaster, but, even in his desperation, he will not consent to Maddock's demand that he abandon his principles. He fights to protect his

"Once more we must bow to Mrs. Fiske. Of all the women on our stage, she is the one, and the only one, to hold up a torch that dims the footlights. With the directness of her clear-sighted art, she took 'The High Road' to triumph."—*New York Evening World*.



"Don't you think you will need your hat?"

"In 'The High Road,' Edward Sheldon exhibits a definite improvement in theatrical skill, notable ingenuity in the development of striking stage situations and a growing mastery of compact, forcible and dramatic dialogue. The play contains much common sense and sound morality."—*New York Evening Post*.

wife but finally at Maddock's demand and at the request of members of his own national committee, Mrs. Barnes is put on the rack. At first she denies, then she evades; she knows what admission means. But, bit by bit, the truth is forced from her; every avenue of escape is closed. The mistake of twenty years before rises in the crisis to threaten defeat.

Her husband, overcome in the crush of circumstances, is powerless; in his disappointment, feeling that all is lost, he turns upon and upbraids her, but in infinite tenderness and compassion, she sends him to make his final address of the campaign. She summons Maddock and they stand face to face. Mary has nothing to conceal and she conceals nothing. She answers Maddock's threat of exposure by announcing that she herself will make a statement to the men and women of America which shall be published in every newspaper in the land and she will let the public decide. This statement she dictates—making the first stage use of the Edison dictaphone—and it is a statement, despite her own earlier error, that is greatly to Maddock's discredit, placing as it does before the country his reasons for adopting the scandalous means he has done to force a surrender of her husband's principles. Her determination defeats him, routs him utterly, and he realizes that he can accomplish nothing in the face of it. Acknowl-

"Mrs. Fiske, we sometimes think, has a repertoire of souls rather than one of characters. And to that repertoire she may now add that of Mary Page, idealist. In 'The High Road' Mrs Fiske has one of those supreme moments to which no other woman of our stage can do as full justice as she."—*New York Evening Mail*.



"It's no use—I can't lie any more—we are completely
at this man's mercy."

"When Mrs. Fiske had finished a long and arduous scene in the fourth act of 'The High Road, there was no doubt that she is still the greatest actress on the American stage. She had carried the audience with her as she expressed constantly changing emotions"—*New York Evening Telegram*.

edging that his weapons have been swept from his hands, he withdraws, and Barnes returns from his speech-making to find the spectre laid again in its grave and the future secure and happy.

Mr. Sheldon's story is a big story, important, and fraught with matter worth pondering. He touches on a woman's ability to rise from an early error; on "big business" interest in our politics; he suggests a nation's willingness to show a ready sympathy for the woman who falters and recovers; he presents a model presidential candidate who has the courage of his convictions, and to whom the written declaration of a campaign platform has some genuine significance.

He goes on to show a woman's development, her soul's progress through a period of twenty-three years, and leaves us with recollections of a wife in the twilight of middle age, placid, happy, loved, loving and triumphant.

It should not be taken from the foregoing that Mr. Sheldon has penned a story without relieving touches. On the contrary there is, particularly in Part III, an element of most natural and delightful comedy, such as Mrs. Fiske can express with greater deftness and point than any other stage artist of her day.

Mrs. Fiske's art is conceded to have reached its zenith in her visualization of Mary Page, her illusion of youth in Part I, and her wonderfully poignant and womanly manifestations in the later acts of the play, having brought to her the crowning critical encomiums of her career.

"Mrs. Fiske, poised and perfect in every side of her multiple performance, played the girl with all the girlishness of sixteen years. Her step, her voice, her gestures, melted into a marvelous portrait of youth. Wonderful Mrs. Fiske!"—*New York Morning Telegraph*.



"I'm going to call up Washington and have the investigation started immediately."
"And I am going to dictate my statement to the men and women of America and let them judge between us."

At last the great American actress and a great American play have collided. In "The High Road" the first act is poetry, the second act is art and social development, and the third is politics with a fine and vivid bit of drama at its close. But the fourth and fifth acts are drama of the intense sort. It rings like a series of pistol shots, and it leaves the audience stirred and almost stunned by its power, and by its unexpected conclusion. * * * Mrs. Fiske soars like an eagle."—Brooklyn Eagle.

Grand Opera House
Salem
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29

"As a study of character and as a dramatic presentation of certain phases of our present political conditions, the play is genuinely remarkable."—The Outlook.

"The High Road" is by all odds the most significant American play of the season."—Town Topics.



DANA T. BENNETT CO
NEW YORK